AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) 77th Cosntitutional Amendment Act, 1995 was enacted to provide reservation for SCs & STs in promotion under Article 16(4A) of the Constitution of India.

Animal Sacrifices in A.P.

5266. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh tops in animal sacrifice banned under the prevention of cruelty to Animals Act, 1960; and

(b) if so, the action taken to persuade the State Government to take action against the offenders under the relevant law?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI):

(a) Yes Sir. The Animal Welfare Board of India had sent teams comprising of animal welfare officers and animal activists for finding facts of animal sacrifices throughout the Country. All available information points to Andhra Pradesh topping in animal sacrifices in India.

(b) The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and the concerned District Collectors in the State have been requested to take suitable action under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (50 of 1960). The Chairman of the Animal Welfare Board of India has also discussed with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh so as to reduce the animal sacrifices in the State.

Report of WHO on women deaths

5267. SHRI MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that violence against women causes more deaths and disabilities than deaths due to various illness, as reported by World Health Organization;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Centre of Operation Research and Training records in Maharashtra showed 120 cases of dowry deaths and all these women were below 25 years of age;

(c) whether it is also a fact that another study from Delhi revealed that 56 per cent of all suicides were by women and marital discord was the common reasons; and

(d) if so, what preventive steps Government are planning to check?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

New Pension Policy and replacement of PPF

5268. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new Pension Policy as well as replacement of Public Provident Fund Scheme is being framed by Government.

(b) if so, what are the salient features of both the new schemes; and

(c) by when these would come into operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment had commissioned, in August, 1998, a Project OASIS (an acronym of Old Age Social & Income Security) to examine policy questions connected with old age income security in India and submit its recommendations to the Government. The Committee, headed by Dr. S.A. Dave, former Chairman of Unit Trust of India, submitted its final report to Government on 11.1.2000. The Report contains recommendations on the schemes and action that Government may take to ensure that every young worker builds up enough savings during his/her working life which could serve as a shield against poverty during their old age. The issue of implementation of the recommendations, contained in the Report of the Committee, would arise only after Government takes a final decision in this regard.

Distribution of land to landless SCs/STs

5269. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government initiated action to distribute vacant Government lands to the landless families of SCs/STs during 1991-92, as recommended by Dr. Ambedkar Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee; and